

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EUR-12 /077 W
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P R 270258Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4177

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 4456

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINT, KS

SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY MEETS OPPOSITION LEADERS

1. IN THE COURSE OF VISIT TO KOREA, UNDER SECRETARY HABIB HAD A NUMBER OF PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH OPPOSITION PERSONALITIES, INCLUDING NDP, KNCC, AND MEMBERS OF U.S. MISSIONARY COMMUNITY. MEETINGS REPORTED IN THIS MESSAGE TOOK PLACE ON MAY 25.

2. NDP LEADER YI CH'OL-SUNG SAW UNDER SECRETARY PRIVATELY AND HE GAVE HABIB NDP PETITION ADDRESSED TO PRESIDENT CARTER REQUESTING THAT WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS BE CARRIED OUT "VERY PRUDENTLY" AND ADVOCATING REVISION OF MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY TO GUARANTEE AUTOMATIC U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN EVENT OF ATTACK UPON ROK. HABIB POINTED OUT THAT PROCESS OF DECLARING WAR IS DEFINED BY OUR CONSTITUTION AND THUS ARRANGEMENTS MORE SATISFACTORY TO KOREANS ON THIS SCORE COULD NOT (RPT NOT) BE ESTABLISHED.

2. YI WAS SUBSEQUENTLY JOINED BY OTHER NDP FIGURES - KO HUNG-MUN, KIM YONG-SAM, KIM HYONG-IL AND O SE-UNG. THEY RAISED VARIOUS OTHER OBJECTIONS TO WITHDRAWAL, SUCH AS QUESTIONING WHY U.S. TROOPS ARE TO BE WITHDRAWN "ONLY FROM
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KOREA," WHETHER THERE IS ROOM FOR CONSIDERATION OF ROK CONCERNS IN U.S. PLAN, AND WHETHER WITHDRAWAL COULD NOT BE POSTPONED UNTIL AFTER GUARANTEES OF PEACE RECEIVED FROM PRC AND SOVIET UNION. UNDER SECRETARY ANSWERED POINTS RAISED, REFERRING TO FLEXIBILITY IN U.S. PLANNING, LACK OF NORTH KOREAN RESPONSE TO OUR PROPOSALS THROUGH PRC AND SOVIETS TO DISCUSS SITUATION WITH ROK PRRSENT, AND IN

GENERAL EMPHASIZING VALUE TO ROK OF REITERATION OF U.S.
TREATY COMMITMENT ADVANCED BY NEW ADMINISTRATION. NOT
UNEXPECTEDLY, PRESS CARRIED DISTORTED SUMMARY OF CONVERSATIONS
NEXT DAY.

3. UNDER SECRETARY ALSO MET MAY 25 WITH KNCC SECRETARY GENERAL KIM
KWAN-SOK. REV. KIM SAID CHRISTIANS OPPOSED WITHDRAWAL
BECAUSE OF DANGERS TO ROK SECURITY BUT ALSO BECAUSE
HEIGHTENED CONCERN OVER KOREAN SECURITY MIGHTIANABLE ROKG
TO TIGHTEN UP FURTHER ON DISSIDENTS. UNDER SECRETARY
ASSURED REV. KIM THAT WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE ARRANGED SO AS
NOT TO ENDANGER KOREA. IN REPLY TO UNDER SECRETARY'S
QUESTIONS ON CURRENT STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, REV. KIM
THOUGHT SITUATION HAD DETERIORATED RECENTLY. UNDER
SECRETARY RECONFIRMED CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S COMMITMENT
TO HUMAN RIGHTS WHILE NOTING THAT PUBLIC CRITICISM OF OTHER
COUNTRIES WAS SOMETHING THAT WOULD DEPEND ON OUR ASSESSMENT
OF UTILITY IN EACH INDIVIDUAL SITUATION.

4. FOLLOWING MEETING WITH REV. KIM, UNDER SECRETARY RECEIVED
TWO U.S. METHODIST MISSIONARIES, REV. E. POITRAS AND REV.
G. MATTHEWS. THEY EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER WITHDRAWAL ALONG
LINES RAISED BY KIM. UNDER SECRETARY AGAIN AFFIRMED U.S.
ACTION WOULD NOT ENDANGER KOREA, AND NOTED THAT USE ROKG
MIGHT MAKE OF WITHDRAWAL FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES WAS
SPECULATIVE MATTER. FRANK EXCHANGES ON HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION
ENABLED UNDER SECRETARY TO REAFFIRM COMMITMENT OF CARTER
ADMINISTRATION ON THIS ISSUE AND EXPLAIN THRUST OF POLICY.
MISSIONARIES SEEMED PLEASED WITH MEETING.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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TAGS: SHUM, PINT, MARR, KS, (HABIB, PHILIP C)
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